

## Interior People: A Look at Department Employees

### A Tradition of Leadership

Wilma Lowery

The President and Congress have designated March as National Women's History Month. Established by Congressional Resolution in 1987, National Women's History Month provides an opportunity to reflect on the words and deeds of the current and previous generations of women, many of whom we did not study about in history.

The theme for this year's observance is "A Fine and Long Tradition of Community Leadership." The Department joins hundreds of organizations across the country as we take this opportunity to recognize and honor the women who have been leaders in their own communities.

As more and more legal and attitudinal barriers to women's advancement have fallen, women have entered positions of leadership and responsibility in virtually every field of endeavor. Women have the opportunity to participate fully in the emerging social, political, and economic life of our country.

The following women have inspired us with their leadership:

**Mary K. Goddard** was the only printer in Philadelphia who would print the Declaration of Independence, which was a treasonable act.

At the **first women's rights conference**, held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, the attendees issued a "Declaration of Independence," which included statements that women and men were equal and that women should have the right to vote.

**Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth and Susan B. Anthony** struggled to win the right to vote for women today but were never able to exercise that right themselves.

**Jeanette Rankin** was the first woman elected to Congress.

**Helen Keller** and her teacher, **Annie Sullivan**, taught us that disabilities are in the eyes of the beholder; a person with disabilities can achieve greatness when allowed the opportunity to learn and compete on an equal basis.

**Marian Anderson** was refused permission to sing at Constitution Hall because of her race. Undaunted, and with the assistance of First Lady **Eleanor Roosevelt**, she moved her concert to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and gained national attention. The concert is depicted in a mural next to the cafeteria in the Main Interior Building.

### New Mineral Named For USGS Geologist



George Ericksen

**Dr. George E. Ericksen**, a prominent USGS geologist, who passed away in January 1996, has been honored by the International Mineralogical Association, which recently gave the name **georgeericksonite** to a newly described mineral from northern Chile. It is an evaporate mineral that dissolves in water and was found in the dry, desert

environment between the city of Antofagasta and the *Salar de Atacama*. An article on *Dr. Ericksen's* career, achievements, and honors is on Page 13.

**Shirley Chisholm**, an African American, was the first woman to seek the nomination for President of the United States from a major party.

**Wilma Mankiller** was the first woman to head one of the major Native American tribes.

**Rosa Parks** is an African American woman whose refusal to move to the back of the bus set off the Birmingham bus boycott, which resulted in the eventual passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Dr. Antonia Novello** was the first Hispanic woman to be appointed as Surgeon General.

**Janet Reno**, U.S. Attorney General, is the first woman to hold this

position.

**Maya Lin**, architect and artist, designed The Wall for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

**Madeleine Albright** is the first woman appointed Secretary of State.

Wilma Lowrey is with USGS's Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

#### President's Message to Federal Workers

As I begin my second term as President, I want all of you to know how proud I am of your hard work and accomplishments during the past four years. I came to Washington with a high regard for civil servants, and you have only confirmed that opinion.

And I'm not the only one who has been impressed. Four years ago, public confidence in the federal government was at an all-time low. But you have begun to change that attitude. Even in a time of leaner budgets and smaller staffs, you have improved service to the public, forged effective partnerships with communities and private businesses, and discarded old-fashioned management systems.

Now, for the first time in decades, public opinion of federal agencies is markedly on the rise. Congratulations—the credit for this stunning turnaround goes to you.

Vice President Gore and I are excited and optimistic about the prospects for America in the next four years. We are on the right track to the twenty-first century and are picking up speed as we continue to work with you to reinvent government. I believe that our nation will enter that new century stronger, more confident, and more capable than ever before. And I believe that a large part of that success will be achieved because of the energy and talent of each of you—the men and women of the federal government.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of your fellow Americans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
The White House  
February 6, 1997

## and Their Work

# Searching the Sinai

## A Bureau of Reclamation Archeologist Helps Survey the Bridge Between Africa and Eurasia.

Kimball Banks, Archaeologist, Dakotas Area

Last year, I took a 4-month leave of absence from Reclamation's Dakotas Area Office to participate in an archaeological survey of the Sinai in Egypt.

Geographically, the Sinai is the bridge between Africa and Eurasia. Because of its geography, the area has been critical in human history, just as it remains today. If one takes the long view of human history and accepts the premise that humans originated in Africa, then the Sinai was the route by which our ancestors left Africa.

The survey was undertaken in conjunction with a Reclamation project sponsored by the Egyptian government to attract a more permanent population to the Sinai. (I just can't seem to escape water projects.) The project is funded in part by the U.S. Agency for International Development, and involves the construction of irrigation plots, agricultural stations, and pumping stations. The survey's objective was to evaluate the nature and extent of archaeological sites that may be damaged by these activities. The inventory documented that sites are being damaged.

The survey was coordinated by the Combined Prehistoric Expedition, a consortium of scientists from Southern Methodist University, the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Egyptian Geological Survey, and the Egyptian Antiquities Organization. Archaeologists and geologists from the United States, Poland, and Egypt made up the team, along with a camp staff supplied by the Egyptian Geological Survey. Local Bedouins were employed as camp guards and guides.

We lived in a tent city with each scientist having his own tent, bed, kerosene lantern, and a ration of five gallons of water every three days. Most of the food was secured locally from one of these agricultural stations, and water came from one of the pumping stations. As our tent city was far from the city lights, entertainment was in scarce supply. Evenings were spent discussing politics and how best to keep the scorpions out of our tents. The occasional snake and jackal also were sources of conversation.

### The Wadi Jirafi Basin

The survey focused on the Wadi Jirafi Basin in the east-central Sinai. This large basin is located about 30 kilometers inland from the Gulf of Aqaba and the wadi flows north into the Negev region of southern Israel. The entire area is very rugged as the Sinai is geologically active. Both the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba are situated on active fault zones. Most of the physical geography of the



Site 29, above, contained typical Bronze Age compounds surveyed by members of the Combined Prehistoric Expedition. Photos of Tent City and Site 29 by Kimball Banks



At left, Kimball Banks is captured for posterity in front of his tent near the Wadi Jirafi Basin in east-central Sinai. In addition to the ancient archeological sites recorded, the survey continually encountered evidence of the conflicts between Egypt and Israel that have occurred since the 1950s, including exploded and unexploded ordinance, bombed vehicles, a bombed-out airfield, and a destroyed munitions dump.

### The Bronze Age Sites

Some of these compounds are quite complex, consisting of several large compartments that are conjoined or a series of separate individual compartments. Such sites may represent small villages or places that were reoccupied over a period of time. The migratory movements of Bronze Age pastoralists parallel those of modern Bedouins in that both migrated seasonally between wadi basins and upland regions.

The most distinctive group of sites consist of what are labeled as cult or sanctuary sites. This site type is unique as it exhibits internal structural consistency and organization. Such consistency is suggestive of a religious affiliation. Unfortunately, these sites consistently lack artifacts, which makes it impossible to assess function, age, and cultural affiliation without any excavations.

At a minimum, such sites contain two adjacent rectangular stone alignments and at least one semi-circular alignment of small stone circles that partly encircles the rectangular alignments. These rectangular alignments each measure about 8 x 15 meters while the semi-circular alignments are about 500 meters long.

Other recorded sites consist of several tumuli or burial mounds and two kite sites, all of which are also thought to date to the Bronze Age. Kite sites consist of long linear rock alignments that converge to form a V. The alignments are more than 100 meters in length. The apex always contains at least one large circular or square structure. These sites are thought to be game drives associated with gazelle hunting. Gazelle were driven down the alignments to the structure at the apex which served as a corral.

The archeological sites that were recorded, particularly the Bronze Age sites, do not appear to be associated with sites of comparable age in the Nile Valley. What was happening in the eastern Sinai was distinct from what was going on elsewhere in Egypt. The archaeology of this area of the Sinai, which has received little attention, represents a unique chapter in Egyptian history. The survey not only documented that archaeological sites are present in the eastern Sinai and that they contribute to the history of Egypt but also that future Reclamation activities will definitely affect these sites.